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THE
WANDERINGS
OF THE
IMAGINATION.

BY MRS. GOOCH.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

AFTER obtruding my late productions on the Public, I retired into the country, where I might have passed fifteen months in endless apathy, had I not felt that idleness, if not the root of all evil, is at least the bane of all good; and that however the spirits

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may be depressed by misfortune, or the body harrassed by fatigue, the mind, still active, will rather create visions, and pursue phantoms, than subjugate itself to a total oblivion of all the blessings of this life.

Though I had little inclination to be perfectly unemployed, I had as little to busy myself in those works of Fancy and Fiction, which, under the
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PREFACE.

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title of Novels, cost much time and great application ; and in the composition of which so many of my fair Countrywomen eminently excel.

Yet was I determined not to sacrifice the peaceful moments allotted to me in mental slumbers. I considered that I have seen much ; that I have reflected more ; that my reading had not been inconsiderable ;

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and that I had travelled not without some attention to the men and manners of various countries; that the recollection of some of these objects might not only amuse myself, but prove interesting to people less accustomed to diversity of situation, and, perhaps, less qualified to draw inferences from what they see.

I concluded

I concluded then, that without wearying myself so as to deprive my mind of the repose it required, and at the same time to keep it's powers in action, I might devote a part of my time to the recollection and recital of such of my *Wanderings* as could not be recounted without some topics for amusement, and some hints for instruction.

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But though I thus draw from the fountain-head of actual observation, in some cases, and from experience in others, my Reader is not to infer that my Book will be less entertaining than the *Wanderings of Fiction*. For I need not tell those who are capable of making observation, that almost every life is full of adventure ; of strange transitions and wonderful revolutions ; and he that
adheres

adheres to simple facts, and relates what passes before him, need seldom have recourse to fiction for subjects even marvellous, and such as may at once instruct and delight the Reader.

The principal object of a Writer, thus circumstanced, is to select with discretion, and to relate with effect. In this I know not how far I may
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have succeeded, because I am ignorant of the extent of my own powers, and conscious only of my good intentions.

With these sentiments, and impressed with a due sense for the favourable reception of my former productions, I humbly submit to the candour and to the protection of the Public my *Wanderings of the Imagination*.

THE
WANDERINGS
OF THE
IMAGINATION.

FIRST WANDERING.

DURING an excursion last Summer in the county of Kent, when my finances would not afford me a better conveyance than a stage-coach, I frequently amused myself, (not, as is usual, with the different

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countenances and characters of it's passengers) but with those incidents on the road, with which chance not unfrequently furnished me.

As I was admiring the beauty of the hop-grounds, which flourished in rich luxuriance near the side of the Ocean, a sailor caught my attention. He no sooner perceived the coach, than he ran eagerly towards it ; his countenance was expressive of something between sorrow and gladness. On his right side was a stump, which he emphatically held towards us ; his left arm he extended

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ed towards the Sea, which, as his eye glanced over, appeared to intimate, "This still remains for the service of my Country!"

Perhaps the chearful tar had no such idea as that which I hastily formed on seeing him; but his smiling countenance indicated something above the generality of beggars, who, conceiving that their mutilated bodies are insufficient to excite pity, aim at a distortion of features, and a story in which the marvellous bears the strongest part, as better calcu-

lated to impose on the genuine feelings of humanity.

The contrasted appearance of this son of Neptune pleased me; but while I was ruminating in his favour, I was neglectful of the more essential mode of serving him; and before I could reach the bottom of my pocket, the coach drove on, and left him to the chance of a more favourable moment in the hearts of succeeding travellers, who might probably be actuated by different feelings than mine to relieve his

his necessities. I could not, however, help reflecting, that good intentions ought to be speedily performed ; and that to neglect opportunities of benevolence, is not conformable to the doctrine and practice of him who made the human heart.

In the county of Kent, and her little Island of Thanet, Nature is gaily, and luxuriantly dressed. The extremes of affluence, or penury, are seldom met with ; the lands are fertile, and well cultivated ; and the round bodies of the horses bespeak

the ease of their employers. Here are various little plants elsewhere unknown; and the botanist would find his labours amply rewarded by strictly scrutinizing the soil of Thonet.

Were I inclined to extend description, I should fully expatiate on the beauties and manners of this pleasant county; which I saw with pleasure, and left with regret; but as I intend this to be rather an irregular journal, than a studied publication, I will bid adieu to it, and all its delights; and in wishing its inhabitants every enjoyment

joyment that can arise from industry,
and benevolence, proceed to give an
account of my

SECOND

SECOND WANDERING.

I COULD never account for national prejudice. It is a narrow-minded opinion, inconsistent with reason and humanity : it extends itself to counties, towns, and even villages. The Spaniards are proud—the Italians and Portuguese revengeful—the French barbarous—and England is supposed to be, by Englishmen, the *only* spot of Europe which unites

unites *every* virtue, untainted by *any* vice. Born myself an Englishwoman, and the daughter of a Portugueze, I feel a more natural propensity towards this country, the harbour of my birth and education, than towards Portugal ; although the laws of England have sufficiently operated against me, to excuse any prejudice I might in common justice form against it. These laws (the boast of Englishmen) have been exercised towards myself with severity, but without justice : they have been strained against a weak woman, and have proved a galling yoke of slavery,

ry, when they should have served as a barrier against injustice and oppression ; and they have fully convinced me, that in this *Christian* kingdom, as elsewhere, the hydra of despotism rears her head unabashed, if not swayed by a golden sceptre. Money, and its concomitant, *interest*, bear all before them. In vain will talents, merit, and even virtue itself, lay claim to protection ; these are weak prerogatives when opposed to wealth, no matter by what means acquired. The Nabob, who returns home loaded with the spoils of the East, to obtain which he has waded through
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the blood of thousands, becomes respected as a worthy member of community, as soon as it is known he is a rich one. But should the same person return to this his native country, poor, friendless, and forlorn ;—should he urge in excuse for his poverty the uprightness of his heart, which spurned at the idea of acquiring wealth by cruelty and usurpation, how would he then be received ? Where would he find the great man to patronize him ? and where, alas ! the sympathetic mind to commiserate, and the benevolent hand to alleviate his necessities ? In England, I fear,

I fear, he would not ; or, if he did, it would be more likely in the compassionate breast of a stranger, than in that of what custom, and custom only, calls *an old friend*.

From this dangerous, because most abused of epithets, arises principally the source of all our misfortunes. We cling to it with eager hope, and are almost as frequently met by disappointment.

“ Disappointment smiles at Hope’s career !”

In all our wayward pilgrimage through life, we console ourselves
with

with the certainty of reciprocal esteem and disinterested friendship. Youth and prosperity attach themselves to the specious forms of kindness ; but the flattering illusions last no longer than the objects which attracted them ; and the once-admired favourite of Fortune, no longer in possession of *more* than the *desire* to do good, becomes an alien to the society of which he was once the *support* and the *pride*. This, indeed, seems an argument in favour of misanthropy ; whereas it only strongly inculcates the necessity of limiting our benevolence and our desires, and submit to the dictates of prudence.

I was particularly led into these reflections, by a circumstance which lately occurred to me. As I was enjoying my meditations in a retired part of St. James's Park, at an hour proscribed there by custom and fashion, a countenance, of which I had a slender recollection, met my eye. The meanness of his attire was no obstacle to my perceiving that he was a *gentleman*. He walked a few paces before me, and then sitting down on the first bench, pensively leaned his head on his hand, and attentively considered me as I past. I proceeded slowly down the avenue, and

and took occasion to observe whether he followed me. He kept his place till my return, when he looked sorrowfully in my face, and emphatically shook his head. His meaning was too plain not to be understood : and I answered it by placing myself on the seat near him.

I believe our looks mutually bespoke a wish, mingled with a sort of timid fear, about making the first advance ; and in this situation we had probably remained some time longer, had he not, as he afterwards told me, seen something in my face
that

that bore testimony to a feeling heart. With a tremulous voice, he asked me if he was mistaken in my name, which he mentioned ; and being satisfied that he was right, he added, “ No wonder, Madam, that an interval of twenty-two years, and my present appearance, should conceal from your remembrance the person of Captain S——.”

The expression of his countenance, and the tone in which he uttered these words, were more convincing proofs of his veracity, than I could discover in the imperfect
traces

traces of a form I had once beheld. That form, which I once saw the repository of every manly grace, was now palsied and emaciated, and seemed bending towards the earth, as if anxious to embrace it's last asylum. So true is the observation of an accurate observer of human life : " He that wanders about the world sees new forms of misery ; and if he chances to meet an old friend, meets a face darkened with troubles."

I assured him, that I did indeed remember Captain S—— ; but that surprize and sorrow now damped the

joy I should have felt on the renewal of our acquaintance, had I found him in a situation more worthy of him. I intreated him to believe, that however hardly fortune had dealt by him (and that she had dealt hardly I could not doubt), there still existed some few compassionate hearts ; and that I was proud to place mine among the number. He gently pressed my hand to his lips ; intreated I would name an early day for giving him another meeting in the same place ; and telling me he was then going by appointment to see *his old friend*, and former Colonel, Lord G.

G. he tottered down the avenue, but not till we had agreed on meeting the following morning at twelve ; when he promised to acquaint me with the success of his visit, from which he already seemed to derive the most sanguine expectations. My eyes could only follow him for a few minutes, but my heart ceased not to accompany him throughout the day ; and while I pondered on the vicissitudes of life, and retraced his former situation, I could not help sorrowfully contrasting it with his present embarrassments.

Captain S— had married in early youth the woman of his heart. Her fortune was very small ; nor did he possess any other independance than that which arose from his commision. He was allied to many noble families, and had received an education more suitable to his connections than his expectations. His Lady was not in any respect his equal ; she was the only child of a poor, but honest, curate in Wales, where she became acquainted with the Captain, at that time an Ensign in a marching regiment, quartered at Glamorgan : he saw, became enamoured,

ed, and married her. They lived with œconomy and comfort about five years, in which time she bore him a son. This event seemed to operate in their favour, as a distant relation of his mother's, whom he had hitherto known only by name, wrote to him on hearing of it ; and in consequence of the good character which had answered his enquiries, he had deposited in the hands of Mess. Cox and Greenwood a sufficient sum of money, to enable him to purchase a company on the first occasion that might offer.

Our young adventurer no sooner received this unexpected letter, than he solicited and obtained leave of absence, and hastened to London, when he immediately waited on the gentlemen above-mentioned ; and hearing that the commission was prepared for him, and that the money deposited in their hands exceeded by some hundreds its purchase, he resolved on joining his company without delay. Little time was required to settle his affairs : he wrote to Mr. S——, and to his father, strongly recommending to the latter those dear relatives he committed to
his

his protection ; and inclosing bills to nearly the whole amount of the money which remained in his hands, he soon after embarked in the first ship to join the new regiment to which he belonged, and which was at that time stationed in Jamaica.

Imagine not, gentle reader, that Captain S— thus quitted all he held dear without a pang. His heart was the receptacle of the finest feelings of humanity ; and if he avoided taking a long, perhaps a last farewell, it was in order to avoid the too powerful temptation of a change in his re-

solution. He figured to himself the tears and intreaties of an affectionate wife, the winning smiles of an infant boy; and to their future welfare he gladly sacrificed every selfish idea of present felicity. These reflections accompanied him throughout a long and perilous voyage, which was at last completed without any material occurrence.

It was during his short stay in London that I met with him. The recent kindness of his kinsman had proved a sure passport into the houses of his other relations. He procured
from

from them all not only a general invitation during his stay there, but many flattering letters of recommendation to the principal families and military men whither he was going. His person was uncommonly graceful, and the bright glow of prosperity beaming on his fine open countenance, indicated the native honesty that warmed his heart. I was at that time not more than fifteen; Captain S— about four-and-twenty. Such an object was well calculated to awaken the feelings of artless sensibility. Young and romantic as I then was, I could imagine no higher delight

light than that of marrying Captain S—, and following his fate “beyond unknown seas.” Alas ! I knew not that he was already the betrothed partner of a more fortunate fair ; and when, on his discovering what I found it difficult to conceal, he candidly revealed to me his situation, I could only offer up sighs and tears at his departure, which wore away *almost soon after* the object which had created them disappeared.

THIRD

THIRD WANDERING.

THE next morning I was punctual to my appointment; but waited above an hour before I perceived Captain S —. At length he came, and made no secret to me of what had detained him. He informed me, that having gone on the preceding day to Lord G——'s, he could

could with difficulty gain admission into the hall; where, after having been for some time insulted by the enquiring looks, and questions, of several impertinent footmen, he seemed likely to remain; not one of them, though assured he waited on his Lordship by his own appointment, appearing willing to stir from their chairs to announce him. He continued there some time; during which he had the mortification to see several of his old acquaintance alight from their carriages, and pass, without deigning to look towards him. He patiently waited the return
of

of these great people, and then repeated his request of a moment's audience, which was answered by a desire that he would call again the next morning, at the same hour.

He went, and found orders to admit him. Lord G——, with that tone of authority which superior fortune always gives to the supercilious, however polished, and to the ungenerous, however courtly, reproached him in very acrimonious terms with having suddenly thrown up his commission, at a time when promotion was becoming general,
and

and his Country particularly demanded his services.

Stung to the heart at a reproof, which while he knew to be severe, he felt to be just, he alledged, in excuse, what to a delicate mind would have been an all-powerful one. His *wife*—her *situation*: Lord G—— interrupted him, by telling him that all such feelings should be sacrificed to self-interest. He then rang his bell, called for his carriage, and putting a solitary guinea into the hands of Captain S——, cast reflections on his conduct, that were as galling as
unmerited,

unmerited, and wishing him good morning, rid himself of a visitor, whose reduced circumstances were his only mark of inferiority.

I was less surprized than Captain S—— at the conduct of Lord G—; and after making some comments, naturally arising from the transaction, I prevailed on him to accompany me home, and to relate to me his narrative, which he did in the following words.

“ I was received in Jamaica with much kindness by my brother officers;

cers; and my letters procured me many distinguished attentions from the principal families there. My intercourse with many gay young men, and the life of amusement (not to say of dissipation) which I led, might, in a heart less tender than mine, have dispelled the gloom that had hung over me since my departure from England. But I did not find it so; my mind perpetually wandered over the past scenes of domestic delight; and my heart inwardly sighed, as I reflected on the expanse of ocean that divided me far from them. My wife was young,
and

and ignorant of the World; and though the letters which she wrote me were filled with love, and regret, I suffered myself to dread a change in her affections, and gave way to the most dismal forebodings, which, instead of being diminished, were augmented by time.

“ A captain in our regiment, whose name was *Nesbitt*, was on the point of returning on leave of absence to England. The death of his mother had put him in possession of considerable property, and it was necessary that he should settle his affairs.

fairs. My heart prompted me to make particular overtures of intimacy to Captain Nesbitt, that I might influence him to see, and give me a particular account of my family. At that time too, I had unfortunately lost to him a sum of money at play; which, though not very considerable, was more than I could command, previous to his departure. On my mentioning it to him, he treated it lightly, and assured me he had not at that time any occasion for it. I received from him the most consolatory promises, and we parted with all the reciprocal good wishes that
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can be supposed to arise from a concluded friendship, and an assurance that I should hear from him frequently on the subject which alone interested my heart.

“ Captain Nesbitt was punctual to his word ; he wrote me an account of his safe arrival in London, and that he was going to pass five or six weeks with a party of his friends at Swansea, from whence he should make it his first business to wait on Mrs. S——. The next ship brought me a packet from herself, in which she mentioned having seen him, and

at a time when a visit from a friend of mine was particularly welcome, as she had just lost her father, and retired to a small farm-house near Glamorgan, till she should hear from me in what manner she should dispose of herself. She solicited my permission to join me in Jamaica, and that I would negotiate her voyage with one of the first returning Captains, that he might settle in my name for every suitable accommodation. This was the project I ardently sighed for, but I wished it to come from herself; and the silence I had observed on it during her father's
life-

life-time, being no longer necessary, I answered her in the effusions of a heart filled with love and gratitude, and gave, as she desired, all proper directions to forward her approaching departure.

“ Nothing but witnessing her safe arrival, could convey such transport to my mind, as seeing the ship get under weigh, that bore my letter, and was charged with the commission to bring her once more to my arms. I watched the wind and weather with anxiety, and in idea followed the vessel to her destined port.

I passed the intervening time in fondly anticipating the arrival of the welcome stranger, and in preparing every thing for her reception.

“ I had particularly attached myself to a Black, of the name of *Scipio*. He was the servant of a Gentleman whom I visited, who bought him in his infancy, and treated him more as a favoured inmate, than a slave. *Scipio* was possessed of a noble mind, and a heart susceptible of affection, and gratitude. He loved his master, and lamented the destiny of those of his countrymen

men who were less fortunate than himself. Often would he wonder why they were so; comparing their labours with his own, and acknowledging their superiority. I frequently observed him to follow me at a distance in those hours when, oppressed by thought, I sought the plaintain's friendly shade, and shunned the converse of mankind; and oft would sorrow overspread his sable countenance while he watched me, as if fearful of my destruction.

“ I was one day ruminating on my situation, anticipating the pleasure,

sure, yet at the same time dreading the frustration of *all* my hopes, when Scipio ran eagerly towards me, and announced the approach of a ship from England. I climbed the highest point, as if to bring her nearer to me. It was too soon for me to expect my wife; all I could hope was a letter from her, and to that I looked with eager joy, as from the shore I espied the gaily painted vessel, gliding gently over the smooth surface of the Deep, as the welcome harbinger of peace. With a palpitating heart I hailed her, as she majestically came towards us, but the
flattering

flattering dream soon vanished, as I heard her pronounced to be from *Bristol*.

“ The keen edge of expectation was quickly blunted by the stroke of disappointment ; yet was the selfish idea soon restrained by the surrounding multitude, as I observed the busy countenances near me, and reflected that the disappointment of *my* hopes might be the completion of *theirs*. I was inwardly vexed that I had suffered myself, like a child, to be hurried away by my passions,

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the ardour of which had proved so constantly fatal to my peace.

“ In a few weeks, several ships from different ports arrived, but none that brought tidings to me. The only account I heard from England, in which I could be interested, was a letter received by Lord G—from Captain Nesbitt, inclosing the resignation of his commission, for reasons which he did not assign.

“ The last expected vessels now arrived, and Scipio one morning, hastily

hastily entering my room, with a joyful countenance, put a packet into my hands. It was from England, but the hand-writing, and seal, were unknown to me. I found it to be from a female distant relation of my wife's, who assured me that she wrote it at her desire, as she had not courage to expatiate on a subject, that she knew would be so contrary to my wishes. She proceeded to inform me, that the health of Mrs. S—— was very seriously affected; owing, in great measure, to the depression of her mind since my departure; that my little
boy

boy was just recovering from the small-pox ; and that these considerations rendered it impossible for her, with safety either to herself, or the child, to undertake the long voyage she had projected. She said she had found it necessary to remove to London, for the benefit of better advice than could be obtained in the country ; and she mentioned a temporary lodging she had taken in the neighbourhood of Islington, till she should hear farther from me how to dispose of herself. Mrs. S—— added a few lines, by way of postscript, as a confirmation of the above, and desired I
would

would write to her under cover to her relation, in whose neighbourhood she resided.

I read—I paused over the letter ; and every time my wild ideas hurried me beyond myself. At one moment, I believed that her affections were estranged from me ; that she no longer wished our re-union, but that indifference had taken place of that affection which it was the study of my life to cherish and improve. At another, I reproved myself for the ungrateful, the illiberal idea ; and to that thought a still more poignant
one

one succeeded. The knowledge I had of her tender mind next convinced me, that her condition was worse than it was described to me. I fancied her sinking under a load of grief, and on the point of death, while I, her friend, her natural protector, was far from her; and to this reflection Reason herself gave way. "Ah," thought I, "how fatal has been my desertion of her; and what recompence could promotion, or wealth itself bestow on me, if purchased by the loss of a wife so tenderly beloved? She is at this moment suffering under the accumulated horrors of
indigence

indigence and slighted affection; and shall I, on whom she has every claim of love and duty, suffer her to believe that the scorching sun of this unhealthy climate has had power to dry up in my heart the pure stream of unadulterated affection? Shall I contemplate her misery, and allow her to endure it? Ah, no! let me rather return to her as I am, unprotected and unprotected;—share with her the scanty pittance acquired by honest integrity, and trust for the rest to *that* Providence, which will never forsake *the pure in heart!*”

Full

“ Full of these ideas, which were hardly formed before they were unalterably fixed, I waited on Lord G. and told him that letters I had just received demanded my quick return to England. I solicited him to accept my dismissal. The perturbation of my mind was visible on my countenance. He looked attentively at me, expostulated on the folly of my conduct ; but was soon convinced that advice and expostulation were equally thrown away on a man who sought no interest but his affections, and consulted no monitor but his heart. Finding at length
that

that I was deaf to his remonstrances, he settled matters in due form; and wishing me a pleasant voyage, politely, yet coolly, bade me adieu. I returned to my lodgings, which but a few days since I had taken delight in adorning for the reception of my Isabella. How sad, how solitary every object now appeared! The sight of numberless little ornaments, peculiar to the country, and which I had selected as from their novelty the most pleasing to her, now lost every charm, and to the affectionate, the grateful Scipio, I bequeathed them. I went, accompanied by him, to the

house frequented by the English Captains, and soon settled an agreement with one of them. As I spoke to him, I observed the honest tear of sensibility steal down the polished cheek of the noble Ethiopian, which he wiped off with his hand, as if to upbraid it with divulging the secret of his heart. A few loose dollars remained in my possession, after I had settled my different accounts: I gave them to Scipio; but he disdainfully rejected them, and told me I robbed him of more than my money could purchase, when I robbed him of his *friend*! These were the sentiments
of

of an untutored negro; a soul unpractised in the wiles of art. Alas, poor Scipio! Though many a year has revolved since we parted; though many a moon has risen to renew the almost-extinguished lamp of nature, since I witnessed in thee that purity of heart which nought but Heaven can bestow, still are thy virtues present to my mind, and still shall remembrance, sickening at the past, reflect on thee, with prayers for thy transition to those mansions, where innocence like thine can alone meet with it's reward!"

The clocks from the neighbouring churches struck three; and vain were my solicitations to my unhappy friend, he could not be prevailed on to share my solitary meal: he abruptly left me, with a promise that he would continue his narrative on the following day.

CON-

CONTINUATION
OF THE
HISTORY OF CAPT. S----

“**I**N a short time I embarked for England. The weather for some time favoured us ; at length the winds, as if conscious they were wafting me to misery, often swelled the reluctantly-yielding waves, and hurried us back from our progression.

sion. In those hours when sorrow and vexation clouded the brows of the labouring mariners, impatient to reach their native shore, a heavy indifference to our destiny clung round my heart; a presentiment of I knew not what blasted each rising hope; and I pondered on the easy transition from human woe, as I surveyed the fathomless gulph below me. Often did I rejoice, while the rough swell lifted us on high, that my Isabella was not exposed to those many dangers of the deep, which we feel but during the time we experience them. Among my few books, was
Falconer's

Falconer's immortal poem of "*The Shipwreck*." I knew the superstition commonly attendant on seafaring people, and I carefully concealed it from their observation. Often in the dead of night, when all were sleeping round me as if insensible to fear, I stole from my cabin, impressed by a far different impulse, and shared the midnight watch, while it's appointed guardian sunk into the arms of happy, but forbidden rest.

At length we quietly reclined on the peaceful bosom of the venerable

Thames. There, where no fears of faithless seas assailed us, my torpid mind roused itself into action, and awakening every restless faculty of my soul, suspended me between despair and hope. I eagerly jumped into the first boat that came near to us, and leaving every thing belonging to me on board, I took a post-chaise from Gravesend, where I landed, and ordering the driver to set me down at the direction I gave him to Islington, soon reached the abode of my new female correspondent. This person had seen me but once, and would then have scarcely recollected me,

me, had not the wildness of my manner in enquiring for Mrs. S—— informed her who I was. She surveyed me with surprize, and, as I thought, embarrassment. I requested she would immediately conduct me to my wife's lodgings, which she at first seemingly consented to; and then, as if recollecting herself, observed, that my sudden appearance might perhaps be too powerful for her newly-recovered health, and proposed my waiting there while she went herself and apprized her of it. I impatiently brooked this delay, yet submitted to it in
consideration

consideration to my Isabella. She told me it was not more than ten minutes walk from her house ; yet I passed near two hours alone in anxious expectation. It was at this time the latter end of September ; and it was past eight in the evening when I had reached the house. The night was dark and gloomy ; and as I stood immoveable at the little gate which bounded the small garden allotted to the habitation, I fancied that every hollow murmur of the wind responsively echoed to my heart, and sigh'd forth, "*Isabella.*" At length they came together ; the
found

sound of her voice still vibrates in my ear, as she faintly pronounced "*Is it you?*" The darkness of the night prevented me from seeing her: I clasped her in my arms, and rushed with her into the house. I placed her on a chair, and by the light of the candle observed her features. Her person was much altered. She was become thin, and her countenance was overspread with a livid paleness. She burst into tears as she exclaimed, "*Ab, Frederick, why, why did you leave me?*" I intreated her to be composed under the certainty that we were met to part no more.

more. I enquired for my boy, who was now in his eighth year. She told me he was placed at a boarding-school, but avoided making any farther mention of him. It grew late, and a small supper was set before us, after which I proposed our going home to her lodgings. To my unspeakable astonishment, she requested that I would not accompany her; and gave for reason that the people where she lodged, not knowing she expected me, might be alarmed at the appearance of a stranger being with her in the night-time. I however insisted, and she consented. Her
house

house was indeed but a few paces from the one we had just quitted. Its first appearance struck me. It was fitted up in a style of expensive elegance; and on the side-board, on which was displayed a quantity of plate, were two salvers, engraved large enough to be perceived without very accurate observation, with the initials of her maiden name. I looked at her with speechless horror, as I stood transfixed to the spot. The powers of utterance were denied me, I gasped for breath. A loud rapping at the street door awakened my recollection, and Captain Nesbit entered

tered the room. He was in a state of inebriety, and the sight of me staggered him. “S——,” said he, as he impudently advanced to take my hand, “I have taken damn’d good care of your wife in your absence ;” and then turning to his guilty partner, continued, “Ifabella, hav’nt I ?” At these words, affection, resentment, all seemed at the moment to die within my breast ; I recollected only that I was in the presence of a woman — (and oh, Heaven, WHAT a woman) — I hastily turned to Captain Nesbitt, and enquired where on the following morning

morning I could speak with him. He appointed the Bedford-arms, Covent-Garden, at two o'clock. I looked at Isabella, who did not attempt to speak, but seemed anxious only about her infamous lover.

“I hurried out of the house, scarcely knowing whither I went, and my steps almost involuntarily conducted me to the one we had left not an hour before. The little gate was locked, and I repeatedly, and in vain, called for admittance. At length an unknown female voice answered me from an upper window, and somewhat

what rudely requested my retreat. On my expostulating, and begging only three minutes conversation with the person I had supped with, she answered me that she was not to be disturbed ; and that if I persisted in alarming the neighbourhood, she should put me in charge of the watch. With these words she shut the window, and I walked wherever chance directed me. I came to the door of a tavern, which stood half-open, seeming to invite the weary traveller. Here I fixed my abode for the night ; nor was it long before

fore my excessive fatigue of mind and body threw me into a state of wished-for insensibility.

CONCLUSION

OF THE

HISTORY OF CAPT. S----

“**V**ARIOUS are the stages of human woe; and long is the catalogue of mental miseries!—A load of grief, so new, so unexpected, burst with the early dawn on my distracted senses, and awakened them to everlasting wretchedness.

“The

“ The next morning I went to the Bedford, and enquired for Captain Nesbitt. The waiter told me he was not there, but asked my name, and said he had a letter for me. I opened it, and read as follows.

“ SIR,

“ As our meeting might be attended with disagreeable consequences to both, you must not be surprized at my declining it. I have but executed the commission with which you intrusted me, and at which you seem highly offended. As I am going to leave town

“immediately, I must beg leave to
“postpone till my return any thing
“you may have to communicate;
“and remain,

“SIR,

“Your humble servant,

“JAMES NESBITT.”

“I pocketed the infamous scrawl,
as I shuddered at the depravity of
human nature. My wife, (why cannot I blot out the dear, the sacred
appellation?) was still wound about
my heart, nor could I attempt to
slacken, without breaking it's every
string. Worthless, yet still beloved
woman,

woman, was it for this that I crossed the seas ? for this that I submitted to an odious stigma cast upon my conduct, degrading even in idea to the character of an officer, and a gentleman ?—for this that I renounced every hope of future advancement ?—Cruel, cruel Isabella ! Better could I behold thee dead ; for what can life be to those who have broken every tie of duty, every claim to the purest affections that can ennoble the intellectual being ?

“ In a fit of frenzy, I flew to her lodgings. A fond, foolish hope to re-

claim her, and a wish to see my still innocent child, led me beyond the bounds of prudence. She had quitted the house, and the people could not, or would not, inform me whether she was gone. I found by them, that they knew her only by the name of her seducer; and that my boy, whom they called by the same name, had accompanied his mother. My next enquiry was at the house of her relation; she had also left town, as they said, for some months.

“I returned to the Bedford-Arms, and hastily scrawled an incoherent letter,

letter, which I left in charge of the waiter there : he unwillingly took it, under pretence that Captain Nesbitt seldom came to their house, and it was uncertain when he might see him again. It ran as follows.

“ SIR,

“ If your heart is not callous to
 “ every feeling of social humanity,
 “ let me implore you to pity as a
 “ man, the distresses to which you
 “ have reduced me. You are young,
 “ but let me hope you are not a
 “ determined villain. A time may
 “ perhaps arrive, when you will feel,

“ like *me*, WHAT IT IS to be a Hus-
“ BAND, and a FATHER !—The opi-
“ nion of the World is of little im-
“ port to those, who, blessed with
“ conscious rectitude, can defy it’s
“ malice.

“ Restore my wife—restore my
“ child—I will receive her once
“ more, as the first, best gift of
“ Heaven ; and her errors shall be
“ blotted from the tablets of my
“ memory. Let me conjure you,
“ Sir, to be the friend of this un-
“ happy woman ; point out to her
“ the path of duty ; and if you have
“ any

“ any real affection for her, make
“ the sacrifice of it to her honour,
“ and future peace. As you deal by
“ *her*, may Heaven, in justice, deal
“ by *you*!

“ I take this method of addressing
“ you, in preference to that which
“ a man of the World might think
“ more consistent with my situation,
“ under the present circumstances;
“ but I feel, while I am writing it,
“ that I am no coward, and that
“ were human miseries to be extin-
“ guished only in blood, the last
“ drop

“ drop of mine should be spilt to
“ save her from perdition.

“ Your answer I shall most anxi-
“ ously wait for at the Gloucester
“ Coffee-house, Piccadilly, from the
“ hour of twelve, every morning,
“ till I receive it.

“ I am, SIR,

“ Your's, &c.

“ FREDERICK S——.”

“ I waited

“ I waited two days at the Coffee-house without hearing from him. I impatiently counted every minute, and anticipated the transition from deep despondency to transcendant joy. I called for coffee, read, or seemed to read, the papers of the day ; and my heart beat at the shadow of every object I saw approaching towards the house.

“ It was near one on the third morning before I heard any tidings interesting to myself. A waiter then came forward, with a smile, and told me that a Gentleman enquired
for

for me. Half breathless, I desired him to be admitted ; my trembling limbs could scarcely support me as he entered, and I begged him to be seated. I asked him if he came from Captain Nesbitt ? He answered in the affirmative, and I attempted to close the door ; but he desired to admit his friend ; and then informed me that he was the bearer of a writ against me, in the name of Captain James Nesbitt, to whom I stood indebted for the sum of two hundred pounds, for money lent me by him, in the West-Indies.

“ I knew

“ I knew full well that a gambling debt was not by law recoverable ; but my heart recoiled at the idea of contesting it, and I determined immediately to extricate myself, however inconvenient. My stock of money was reduced to four hundred and seventy pounds. I paid out of it the debt and costs, which were no small augmentation. I hired a retired lodging, and resolved to wait as patiently as I could, the result of an event which had robbed me of every terrestrial joy. Here I lived many months, with sober, well-disposed people, but gained no intelligence

intelligence of those for whose sake alone I still continued to drag on the load of heavy existence.

“ I was one morning surprized by the entrance of an attorney, who produced me two bills ; the one for a hundred and twenty pounds, which debt, he said, had been contracted by Mrs. S—— for board and lodging ; the other, for twenty-five guineas for one quarter’s schooling and masters for my boy.

“ I candidly declared to him my situation, and my inability to satisfy
these

these demands ; the consequence of which was an immediate arrest ; and I was hurried from my peaceful chamber to the loathsome place appropriated in Newgate for debtors. Here I pined in misery and want. The coarse language of my fellow-prisoners, whose hearts seemed hardened in proportion to their necessities, offended, and disgusted me. I soon after heard that Lord G— was arrived in England. I wrote to him, and he sent a servant to me with momentary relief. Obligation was new to me. Insensibly, and actuated more by despair than choice, I joined

I joined my companions ; and the sight of a few guineas rejoicing them, I proposed our sharing them together. The sum was not sufficient to relieve me materially ; and as the die of misery was cast, I endeavoured to dissipate it's calamity : I drank—I laughed—I joined in their vulgar jokes, and for a while forgot myself. With the morning, rejected reason returned, but vanished as my companions of the time approached me.

“ I passed near two years in this state of mental horror, when I was unexpectedly relieved from it by the
com-

commiserating heart of the then Sheriff, Mr. P. L— M—. To that Gentleman it is not necessary to be personally known. His urbanity, his feelings do so much honour to human Nature, that she is compelled to acknowledge him her masterpiece. In him the poor find a protector; the oppressed, a friend. That Gentleman saw, heard my story, and pitied me. His heart, and purse, were equally opened; and he seemed to satisfy the one, while he bountifully took from the other. I endeavoured to evince my gratitude; but the manly tear glistened in his

VOL. I. G eye,

eye, and I buried it in my heart. I returned to the house where I had lodged, forlorn and desolate, and took possession of the garret over my former apartment.

“I had not been there many days, before the Gentleman above-mentioned condescended to visit me. He was attended by his lawyer, who had been, by his directions, with Mrs. S——. He found her, surrounded by affluence; the new, but acknowledged favourite of the French Duke de ——. She was regardless of my situation, insensible to my misery;

fery ; yet he prevailed on her, partly by intreaty, and partly by threats, in my name, of appropriating her property, to sign an instrument, which he had prepared, and which was a mutual release from all pecuniary matters between us. Nor did the generosity of my noble friend stop here : he hastily slipped into my hand a twenty-five pound note, and hurried down stairs, as if fearful to receive the bare acknowledgment of obligations which can never, never be repaid !

“ Fortune seemed at this time anxious to make me amends for the many injuries with which she had lately overwhelmed me. The relation, to whom I had stood indebted for my commission, and who had left unanswered all the letters I had written to him, now sent for me. He received me with coldness, bordering on displeasure ; and I briefly related to him my whole story. Ah, what a world of light did this meeting cast over my bewildered mind !—He was a very old man, who had been confined some years to his house by various

rious bodily infirmities ; and to such, the plausible appearance of youth and beauty in distress is peculiarly interesting. I found he had received frequent visits from Mrs. S——, and had materially assisted her. Her attentions secured to her his friendship ; and she had art enough to persuade him, that my conduct in the West-Indies had been such as to forfeit every claim to his protection. She assured him, that my commission had been sold to discharge various gambling debts contracted there. This cruel, this unprecedented injury, soon, however, retorted on herself ;

herself ; and as “foul deeds WILL rise,” I was indebted to her for the vindication of my own character, and the total overthrow of that of my unnatural accuser.

“My uncle (for by that name I shall henceforth distinguish him) had found an uncommon affection for my child, who frequently accompanied his mother in his visits to him. He had been well tutored by her how to answer any questions that might be put to him ; yet where there was no suspicion, there could be little danger. Mrs. S—— had constantly assured

fured the old gentleman that she boarded at the house of the relation where I had first seen her. He found himself one day very ill, and was desirous of the company of his little favourite. His housekeeper, whom many years service, and the solitude of her master's life, had placed on a footing that fell little short of being mistress of his house, was the person whom he dispatched for the child: she was nearly as old and infirm as her master; and as her walks had for several years extended no farther than to and from the adjacent chapel every Sunday morning, she could have wished

to evade his proposal of shaking her ancient bones in a hackney-coach, and would gladly have had the commission devolve on the foot-boy, who, with herself, composed the whole of his household establishment. But her master, though a very good man, was a very peremptory one, and she dared not risk his displeasure by a refusal. Mrs. Wilmot accordingly equipped herself in her Sunday gown and cloak, and desiring the coachman to drive very gently over the stones, she sallied forth in quest of the little Frederick; for whom she also, after the example of her master,

master,

master, felt more than an usual affection. She arrived at the house of Mrs. Moore, and on enquiring for Mrs. S——, was answered by a coarse, vulgar-looking woman, that “she know’d no such person ; but that she was a stranger, and her mistress was out.” Mrs. Wilmot was not to be so easily repulsed after her morning’s fatigue ; and on her mentioning the child, the woman added, “ Oh, to be sure, she meant the grand lady that had supped there the night before, after she had been to the play ; for that she had lighted
her

her home, and would tell the coachman where she lived."

Thus directed, they proceeded near half a mile farther ; from whence Mrs. Wilmot would have been probably sent back as much in the dark, had not the sudden appearance of Mrs. S— at an upper window caught her eye, and there was no possibility of denying herself. Mrs. Wilmot ordered the coachman, without much ceremony, to open the door, but knocked repeatedly at that of the house before she was let in. She was at length shewn into a sumptuous parlour,

lour, where every thing bespoke luxury, and Mrs. S—— came to her. Her visible confusion, and the style of her dress, so different to that in which Mrs. Wilmot had been accustomed to behold her, would have soon convinced a person of less penetration than that worthy woman, of the deception practised on her master.

“ Without making any comments, she delivered her message, and earnestly intreated that the little boy might return with her ; to which Mrs. S—— most reluctantly assented.

ed. They were soon seated in the coach, and Mrs. Wilmot thought it her duty to forbear interrogating the child; but confined herself to her own pious reflections on that gentle pity which she thought it necessary for every human being to bestow on the lost young creature, from whom she had just parted. She wished it had not been reserved for her to make the discovery of unquestionable guilt; and while she contemplated the sweet features of the lovely boy, she inwardly ejaculated a prayer to his Creator, that his young mind might remain uncontaminated by bad example;

example ; for she could not suppose that at such early years he could be an adept in the school of deception ; or that a mother, though lost in her own person, could train up her child in the paths that led to infamy and corruption. Alas, his little heart was already less pure than her own ; and he was an able practitioner in the art of dissembling.

“ Mrs. Wilmot’s silence lasted no longer than till her return home ; when immediately requesting a few minutes private audience with her master in his study, she, with many apologies,

apologies, entered into a full explanation of what she had seen, and what she conjectured.

“When dinner was over, my uncle questioned Frederick; and was astonished at the hardened resolution with which he at first equivocated. On finding, however, that his secret had transpired, and his interrogator was resolved, the weakness of a mind not yet sufficiently strong to be consummate in hypocrisy, betrayed him, and he revealed all he knew.

Shocked

Shocked at the idea of suffering the child to return to his imprudent mother, yet not possessing in himself sufficient authority to detain him, there was but one expedient, and that was to send for me. He drew from him a promise not to mention to his mother a word of what had passed ; and promising to him if he did not, such presents as were most desirable at his age, he sent him home ; and it was the day following on which, at his own request, I waited on him.

Our conversation was such as might be expected, and I had the
happiness

happiness to see myself restored to a relation, whom I had hitherto scarcely known. He invited me to reside at his house ; and in a few days his attorney waited on Mrs. S—— with a formal requisition, in my behalf, for the restoration of my son. She complied by force, but had the littleness to take from him all his wearing-apparel, save that in which he suddenly appeared before us. My emotions on seeing him cannot be described. He received my caresses with disgust ; and seemed to consider us both more as his tyrants than his protectors. For several weeks we
tried

tried what effect kindness, little presents, and the partaking of different amusements, would have on his mind. None of these succeeded; his temper was vindictive, stubborn, morose, and even revengeful. He never spoke of his mother, and we as carefully avoided her name in his presence. We fitted up without his knowledge a small room in the house for his use, and stored it with such books as might amuse his fancy, and instruct his mind. No act of kindness made any impression on him. Often did the unmanly tear roll silently down my cheek, as I traced

the distant, but well-finished resemblance of his lovely mother. He frequently observed me as my heart yearned to embrace him, but his ungracious looks repelled the too tender emotion. My uncle at length told me of his determination to send him to school, and hinted at the same time his intentions in his favour. We soon after placed him at an academy ten miles from town, and had the pleasure to receive very satisfactory accounts of his conduct and improvements. We seldom visited, or sent for him, but at the time of the general holidays; as from that mistaken indulgence

indulgence arises so frequently a love of pleasure and idleness, and a disgust to all which should be materially attended to. He wrote, at my express desire, to his mother, to inform her of his new situation, and of the orders which had been given to prevent any interruption of his studies; but this caution proved needless, as she neither answered his letter, nor took any farther notice of him.

I passed about two years in this state of negative happiness, when death suddenly robbed me of my valuable

relation ; a misfortune the more grievous, as it was wholly unexpected. The physician who occasionally attended him had not perceived any alarming symptoms ; and a few mornings after his last visit, Mrs. Wilmot found him dead in his bed. He was a man of sound morals, but great eccentricity. He had been so long estranged from the world, and those few who had any claim of relationship, that 'tis probable he would have left his possessions for the use of public charities, had not Mrs. S——, without intending to serve me, so materially effected it.

As

As it was not unusual for my uncle to pass several days together in his own apartment, during which I seldom or ever saw him, I had no idea till Mrs. Wilmot suggested to me her opinion that a new will had been lately made. Mr. Term, the lawyer whom he had employed to bring my son to us, and in whom he had always appeared to place much confidence, had been latterly more frequent than usual in his visits ; and Mrs. Wilmot was afterwards justified in her opinion that her master had been guided by him in the regulation of his affairs. I

sent immediately for that gentleman, and we proceeded into the gloomy chamber of death, where we had no difficulty to find the object of our search. He opened and read it to us. We found that he had left the bulk of his fortune to my son; an annuity of two hundred pounds to myself; and to Mrs. Wilmot, his household furniture, plate, and other articles, besides fifty pounds a year for her life. Mr. Term was his sole executor; and I had no cause to be displeased with the choice. He appointed that gentleman and myself the joint guardians of Frederick.

Mrs.

Mrs. S—— was not mentioned, but some trifling sums were bequeathed to different people.

“ We found on investigation, that after discharging these incumbrances, my son's property would not exceed from seven to eight thousand pounds. When the funeral was over, I took lodgings in the neighbourhood ; and my son, whom I had sent for on that occasion, returned to his school. I had not been there many days, before I received a letter from Doctor C——, his worthy preceptor, informing me that Frederick had suddenly

disappeared : and that in so secret a manner, that none of the boys, whom he had severally questioned, could give the least intimation of his design. I immediately waited on Mr. Term, and invested him with full power over him, desiring him to act for me as well as himself.

“ We had no doubt of his mother’s being privy to his flight ; but though she did not deny having any knowledge of him, it was impossible to prevail on her to reveal what she had done with him. We gave up the pursuit ; and, though I could not
be

be happy, I endeavoured to be composed.

“ I knew that my re-union with my wife was now beyond the reach of possibility. Dear, and undeserving as she was, I could only pity, and lament her. I knew too that she must be inevitably wretched; for though I was well assured she had a settlement nearly double to my income, yet I was equally so that no provision, however splendid, could compensate for the loss of every social virtue, and the self-accusation of perfidy, and ingratitude.

“ I

“ In a few months, she sent me an insulting letter ; telling me, that as she knew her son’s fortune to be out of the reach of his guardians, she could be under no apprehensions for his future welfare ; but that of his present conduct she should take charge ; which, if we objected to, would oblige her to continue silent respecting his residence. We soon, however, without any difficulty, found out that he was at a respectable military academy ; and as we could not suggest any reasonable motives for withdrawing him, unless it was to prevent him from seeing his
mother,

mother, which we knew would drive them both to extremities, we were silent on the subject; and, at length, answered the different bills that were necessarily contracted for his support and education.

“ My son is now in his twenty-fifth year, and has been nearly nine in a regiment of foot, at this time in Ireland. For my present poverty, I can only alledge, that dangerous rock on which all my peace has been wrecked, a too large portion of *natural affection*. His unbounded extravagance

4
travagance has reduced me to distress; and I have taken up, at different times, to assist him, sums so inadequate to my circumstances, that some years must pass before I can enjoy anew that comfortable independence, which was forfeited almost as soon as acquired!

“Of Mrs. S—I know nothing. Time has blunted the sharp edge of grief; but the wound has penetrated my heart, and *that* will never know a cure.

“My

“ My son knows I can do no more for him, and leaves me to my fate. Thus is every balsamic drop that is mixed in the full cup of human woe, converted into deadly poison ; the more fatal to me, as they issue from the fount that flowed pure and unadulterated from the hands of it's Creator.

“ Thus, Madam, have you patiently attended to the undisguised story of a poor, unfortunate old man, worn out by sorrow more than by years ; a man, who has been a friend, though

though an unsuccessful one, to human nature, but who is now become a burden to himself, and to the World."

I pitied him—I wept with him :
—But it is reserved to the High Power alone whom he worships, to administer consolation.

Should the eyes of youth, and levity, be cast over these pages, may they be moistened by the tear of Sensibility ! And may the heart of every child that is callous to the distresses

stresses of a parent, recoil with horror at the unnatural crime ; and, by returning to his duty, fulfil *the great Commandment of Heaven !*

FOURTH

FOURTH WANDERING.

THERE are few subjects which deserve a closer investigation of the legislative power, and which is more neglected, than the excessive cruelty that is exercised in this metropolis over unhappy, and devoted *animals*. As they have no law to protect them, they are doubly entitled to the attention of Humanity. It is scarcely possible to walk through

through the City, without having one's feelings tortured by the abandoned race of butcher's boys, and drovers. I could mention many, I might say daily instances of what I have been painfully compelled to witness, whenever I was led into that part of the Town. One only I will mention, which strongly evinces philanthropy on one hand, and infamy on the other.

These contrasted practices belonging to the same class of people, the lowest order of the vulgar, are convincing proofs, that *Education* has

less to do with the formation of our ideas, and the realization of our actions, than *Nature*. She governs the human system, while she forms it; and however villainy may be glossed over by the specious arts of accomplished deception in splendid life, or worth may lie concealed under the thick shade of retirement, the innate sentiment still "grows with our growth," and effectually steers us throughout the course of our existence.

It is not three weeks since I was going up Snow-hill, and was met by
a number

a number of sheep, followed by one of these imps of the Devil that I have mentioned. As I was standing by, to let them pass, I was struck by the voice of an old woman, whose "tattered garment spoke variety of wretchedness," and who, (to continue the simile,) was exactly what Fancy pictures *Otway's* witch to have been. She was mourning over one of these wretched animals, who had sunk on it's knees, exhausted by ill-usage and fatigue. One horn was plucked out by the roots; it's legs were lacerated, and streaming with blood, which issued from the nostrils,

while the *Man*, (why am I *forced* to call him so) was employing all his strength in belabouring, with a thick stick it's agonized sides !—The old woman was remonstrating, with all the eloquence of genuine humanity. It was a foreign language to a wretch of this description, and he answered her in his own; while I walked on; unable to bear the sight before me, or to attend to the impious execrations of the infernal cause of it.

How continually do we behold the newly-expired carcase of the generous Horse, that has at last surrendered

dered to toils beyond his strength !
 The horse, which has been proudly
 contended for, and brought a little
 Mine of wealth to his ungrateful
 master, is now denied by him even
 that little that would make his old
 age comfortable. Houseless, and
 hungry, he smarts under the galling
 whip, and is not allowed *that* rest
 which God has equally ordained for
 Man and Brute. Mr. Dibdin's justly
 celebrated song of *The Race-Horse*,
 is more descriptive than I can be of
 the horrid barbarities practised against
 this most useful creature ; and which

is, both in strength and generosity, superior to his masters.

There are many licensed abuses; and I will confine myself to one more only. It is an essential one, and ought to be remedied. I mean, respecting *Servants*. This class of people is particularly happy in its privileges. The Soldier, and the Sailor, are sure to meet with severe corporal punishment, if, in the slightest instance, they disobey the commands of their Superior; but for the Servant, there is no punishment, unless

less caught in the very act of robbery ; and even then, much money, time, and uneasiness, must be the cost, before you can bring yourself publicly to expose them.

How continually it happens, that exorbitant wages are due to these people, which it is not immediately convenient for the master, or mistress, to discharge. In that case, the servant, well acquainted with the circumstance, becomes insolent, or, at best, regardless ; and if you find fault with them, they ask you, why you do not pay, and discharge

them? while they are well convinced, that if you did pay, and discharge them, they must either adopt another mode of conduct, or be reduced to beggary. But though these are facts too common throughout life, yet still, for the honour of humanity, some exceptions are to be found, but, in general, this inference may be drawn from contrasting characters of the same description in different, though similar situations, and proves one important fact, that in all situations, where vulgar minds can have an ascendancy, or pre-eminence, tyranny will ever be the result of their conduct,

conduct, whether in the Drover or the Domestic.

The Courtezan, who, from dirt and darkness, emerges, by fortuitous circumstances, to gaudy splendor, and untasted affluence; or the low-bred mechanic, who, by carping care, and assiduous industry, in taking the advantage of the wants of those with whom he has acquaintance, or connection, rises into opulence, the vulgar mind will always appear in their conduct and behaviour. A haughty overbearing demeanor will always mark their manner

ner to those who may have the misfortune to be under their power, and inconsistent meannesses will ever appear, from under their most sumptuous trappings, when attempting elegance and refinement—but why it should be so is neither unnatural or wonderful—for the truth is, that conscious of their own innate meanness, and incapacity to sustain the character they would wish to assume, they conceive that all who have known them, or do know them, entertain the same contemptible ideas of them as they do of themselves, and hence conclude it necessary, in support of
that

that dignity to which they aspire, or assume, to treat those around them with hauteur and tyranny, to impress on their minds a constant practice of the submission and obedience they wish to exact. It were well if the indigent, who may attain to affluence, or the menial servant, who may arise to superiority of situation in life, would recollect that greatness of soul, and elevation of sentiment, are equally shown, though not so efficaciously proved, in want as in wealth ; in being commanded as in commanding.

Ostensible

Ostensible situations to such as are incapable of filling them, only display the imperfections of the possessor in a more prominent point of view ; and it were well also, if those whom Nature made in hasty moments, and in it's coarsest moulds, whom Reason never regenerated, nor Education ever refined—whose ideas never have, and perhaps never can be enlarged, and whose sentiments, if ever sentiments arose in the breast of such persons, were only conducive to encourage them in the pursuit of their grovelling designs, and barbarous and unrefined opinions,

nions, would seek the coverture of the shade, rather than expose their fantastic enormities, and preposterous ignorance and inability in the sunshine.

FIFTH

FIFTH WANDERING.

IT has been said, and more than that it is generally believed, that happiness is not to be found on earth. I deny it. For although I have never been allowed even to taste it in domestic life (with which the world is too well acquainted to doubt my veracity), yet I have observed almost daily instances of what I call happiness ;

ness ; and which, if not admitted to be such by those in the enjoyment of it, fully demonstrates a wilful incapacity to know its value, and ingratitude to that Being who, for his own wise purposes, bestows or takes it away.

There are two conditions of life from which only I conceive happiness to be naturally excluded ; and by these I mean the extremes of affluence and penury. The man who abounds in wealth cannot be happy. His soul, if naturally great, is confined within the narrow precincts of custom

custom and education, and has no room to expand itself. Few of these have courage, if they do not want inclination, to pry into the distresses of their fellow-creatures ; and they dread the effect of prejudice, as they would dread the effect of treason. I am sorry to speak from my own observation, when I declare, that throughout this wealthy metropolis, I have never yet found one man, rich in the gifts of fortune, who had spirit enough to disdain the tinsel shew that surrounded him, and consecrate his time and his money to those whom he seemed sent into the world

to

to gladden and relieve. One only instance have I heard of it in the female world ; and to her virtues, more than to her rank, may the honest tribute of applause, not the flattering voice of adulation, be given : I mean the Dowager Countess S—, where virtue unites itself to talents, and both combine to render *her* on whom they are bestowed inestimable. What heart can refrain from offering up thanks to it's Creator, who now and then condescends, as in *her*, to shew a well-drawn picture of himself? While she lives, her numerous charities cannot be

forgotten; and when that God whom she adores transplants her to a world more worthy of her, still shall her name remain immortalized, while gratitude holds a place in the hearts of the many indigent her bounties have deigned to relieve !

But to proceed to my ideas of happiness ;—I say ideas, because I have only drawn a sketch of it from what I have seen, and from “ *The Wanderings of my Imagination.*” Can I picture to myself a greater felicity than a happy independent family I once saw in Yorkshire ? They were
many

many in number, yet one soul seemed to animate all. The old farmer, who had no more than he wished for, nor wished for more than he possessed, was one of those jovial, honest, well-meaning men, whose knowledge of the world extended not beyond the limits of his own farm. His family consisted of an old widowed sister, whom he supported, his wife, three daughters, and a son, who imitating his sire in industrious labour and attention to the peaceful and useful arts of agriculture, was requited by that tranquillity of mind

which is ever the result of a good disposition.

Nature had by no means slighted the daughters in the formation of their outward graces ; but had, on the contrary, given convincing proofs that those requisites necessary to engage the eye, and interest the heart of every beholder, were to be met with in the unassuming manners, and unaffected benignity, which beamed in each of their countenances. These strongly indicated that their minds was the soil where all the social virtues, that diffuse happiness

ness alike to the possessor and those in connection with them, were to be found cultivated and sublimed ; endowments which require more of the sunshine in life to sustain or invigorate ; but blossoming and ripening in the shade, bid defiance to the canker of time, and the chilling damps of progressive age. Their prospects in life bounded and unenlarged, gave increase of pleasure and tranquillity, by their having fewer wants to suffice, and fewer expectations to pursue ; for the less desire we have for the gratification of our passions, the more our minds must be at ease. The

airy phantoms and deluding visions raised by the magic of Imagination, are more or less conjured up by awakened passions roused by variety of scenes striking our different senses ; those once awakened, are soon allured ; and allurements once indulged, are seldom allayed. But why do I thus insensibly wander ? Why am I deviating so widely and wildly from my intended narration of rustic felicity ? Yes, I must indulge it. Visions of earthly pleasure, whither are you fled ? Oh, social delights, known only in domestic seclusion, and blooming only in sequestered retirement,

why

why am I forbid to enter your hallowed abodes? I must now only in sadness survey what once I might have enjoyed, had the dictates of nature (in me) been obeyed; and instead of being made the victim of fashion, I should now be solacing myself with the inestimable pleasures of a tranquil mind, and the rational reflection of enjoying all that is worth enjoyment in life, and consequently fulfilling all the ends for which life was bestowed. But, ah! like thousands more who have lived, and will live hereafter, and in spite of all that Poets have sung, and Philosophers

taught, we live not for ourselves, but for others. The pleasures of a fashionable life may not be unaptly compared to the delirium of the brain in a high fever. 'Tis in vain we in imagination visit aerial scenes fraught with all that fancy can bestow to give delight: 'tis in vain we visit gorgeous palaces, and partake of sumptuous banquets, while seated in the magic circle of Wit and Beauty, we enjoy the radiant smiles of the happy, and the compliments of the facetious and the learned: we even in the height of our frenzy still feel there is a chasm in our pleasures, and

a vacuum.

a vacuum in our pursuits and enjoyments ; and when awake to reflection, we most sensibly feel that all has been deception—the malady still rages, and the fever still remains.

But I revert to my first idea; and maintain that happiness *is* to be found; and that I witnessed it in the family I have mentioned : they were uniformly and completely happy in each other ; and the casualties of fate appeared not to terrify by their approach an individual belonging to it. Had that happiness they amply possessed been sufficient to satisfy them, without

without searching farther into the world for an addition to it, one of it's branches had not, by creating her own misery, cast a bleak veil over her fate, and impeded that heart-felt satisfaction which from her alone knew interruption.

Nancy, the youngest daughter, was by nature more susceptible than the rest. She had seen a young sailor in the neighbourhood, and against the advice of all her true friends, consented to marry him, when he should return from a foreign embarkation. She bore his departure

departure with seeming composure ; but a few letters she received from him baffled all that parental love could endeavour to save her, and on the first report of the fleet's intended return, she packed up a few necessaries, took the little money she was, through the indulgence of her parents, become mistress of, and unknown to all sat forward on her disconsolate journey to Portsmouth, to wait his return.

For some weeks she waited in vain ; at length the ship to which he belonged arrived in the harbour.

She

She eagerly discovered the means by which she could go on board ; and fancy pictured to her ravished senses his delight on thus proving her unabated love. Alas, poor Nancy ! the ship indeed returned, but her William had been long consigned to a watery grave. In silent grief she bore the dismal tidings, and returned to her desolate abode. For three days she pined in speechless agony, and on the fourth her account was made.

This melancholy incident gave rise to my endeavouring to express it in the following stanzas :

ON the waves of foaming ocean,
Blue-eyed NANCY heav'd a sigh ;
View'd with trembling limbs their motion,
As dark they roll'd beneath a troubled sky.

Threat'ning clouds in thick succession,
Darted forth their livid store ;
Thunder awful, past expression,
Resounded long and deep adown the ravag'd shore !

On the sea's terrific border,
Nancy roam'd in deep dismay,
And in looks of wild disorder,
Wail'd to the dreary waste, all heedless of her way !

Horrid cliffs that way furrounded,
Beaten by the dashing surge,
Which in dreadful tumults sounded
To Fancy's startied ear, her WILLIAM's funeral dirge !

O'er

O'er the vast of Heaven's covering,
Dark portentous horrors spread ;
O'er the earth tremendous hovering,
Those horrors fill'd her aching heart with dread !

To the tempest's howl she listen'd,
O'er the dashing waves she hung ;
Rais'd to Heav'n the eye that glisten'd,
With the full tear which poignant grief had sprung.

Then exclaim'd, " Ah ! troubled ocean,
" Tell me where beneath the wave,
" Tell me where, with love's devotion,
" I may seek my lost, my lovely WILLIAM's grave ?

" Well ye know that I have lost him,
" Well ye know he's in the deep,
" Well ye know your waves have cross'd him,
" Well ye know he's rock'd in Death's eternal sleep."

She

She spoke and paus'd ; then reasonless and wild
Again she call'd on the unconscious deep
To answer to her plaint :—when, lo, the cliff
Gave way !—and falling with the love-lorn maid,
Poor Nancy ceas'd to murmur and to weep !

END OF VOL. I.